

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors. Conventional claim language is suggested, such as comprising instead of "featuring."

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the smelting chamber" in step 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the vapor" and "the material" in step 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the volatilized arsenic sulfides" and "the material" in step 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the gaseous element sulfur" in step 4. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the arsenic vapor" in step 5. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the air" in step 6. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

In claim 1, step 7, "using conventional method" is indefinite as to its metes and bounds.

Claim 2 recites the limitation "the arsenic concentrate material" in line 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

In claims 18,19,22-31, the numbers and parentheses around same are superfluous.

In claims 17,18,22,23,27,28,30, the structure of the claims is improper as they contain more than one sentence which renders the claims indefinite.

Claims 17-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the necessary structural connections. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted structural cooperative relationships are: those between all the devices recited.

Claims 17-31 of this application conflict with claims 17-31 of Application No. 10/531799. 37 CFR 1.78(b) provides that when two or more applications filed by the same applicant contain conflicting claims, elimination of such claims from all but one application may be required in the absence of good and sufficient reason for their retention during pendency in more than one application. Applicant is required to either cancel the conflicting claims from all but one application or maintain a clear line of demarcation between the applications. See MPEP § 822.

Claims 17-31 are provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 17-31 of copending Application No. 10/531798. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-31 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-31 of copending Application No. 10/531798. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they overlap in scope of subject matter claimed.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

The cited prior art of record does not teach or suggest the instantly claimed combination of process steps nor what appears to be the intended combination of components of the system.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven Bos whose telephone number is 571-272-1350. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 9AM to 6PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stan Silverman can be reached on 571-272-1358. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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